

Masthead Logo

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Shrine

Leonard Nathan

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oggie, oggie, entering
language, and sometimes
a dog will stop and come up
the walk, perhaps
accidentally. May he believe
this is not an accident?
At the screen
welcoming each beast in
love's name, Your emissary.

Rosy / Louise Gluck

for Sandra

When you walked in with your suitcase, leaving
the door open so the night showed
in a black square behind you, with its little stars
like nailheads, I wanted to tell you
you were like the dog that came to you by default,
on three legs: now that she is again no one's,
she pursues her more durable relationships
with traffic and cold nature, as though at pains
to wound herself so that she will not heal.
She is past being taken in by kindness,
preferring wet streets: what death claims
it does not abandon.
You understand, the animal means nothing to me.

Shrine / Leonard Nathan

I've waited for you
in this room, day by day
excluding what wasn't needed
until there's only this green cushion

tassled at the corners
and, in the far wall, a recess
for an orange vase with three white irises,
and a scroll stroked with ink
meant to be a bird flying
or how it feels to fly.

I've made good talk for us both
over tea while snow quietly aged
the pines outside and settled like ash
on the pond where carp
deepen the shadow.

Have you come
without my noticing
and gone again?

Were you the one
simply passing by
whose smile I mistook
and so built all this
and so must live
in the wrong hope?

Sorting the Tools / Peter Everwine

for E. C.

This is the hammer
and the nails.
I enter my brother's house
for the last time.

This is the miner's lamp,
the bit and the sack of dust.
This is the bread
that stinks of carbide.